

Standard 8-3: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the American Civil War—its causes and effects and the major events that occurred during that time.

8-3.2 Explain the impact of key events leading to South Carolina’s secession from the Union, including the nullification crisis and John C. Calhoun, the Missouri Compromise, the Tariff of 1832, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act and subsequent armed conflict, the Dred Scott decision, the growth of the abolitionist movement, and the election of 1860. (H, P, G)

Taxonomy Level: B 2 Understand / Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

In 3rd grade, students explained the reasons for South Carolina’s secession from the Union, including the abolitionist movement, states’ rights, and the desire to defend South Carolina’s way of life (3-4.3).

In 4th grade, students explained how specific legislation and events affected the institution of slavery in the territories, including the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, the Missouri Compromise, the annexation of Texas, the Compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the Dred Scott decision (4-5.7). Students summarized the roles and accomplishments of the leaders of the abolitionist movement and the Underground Railroad before and during the Civil War, including those of Harriet Tubman, John Brown, Frederick Douglass, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sojourner Truth, and William Lloyd Garrison (4-6.2). Students explained how specific events and issues led to the Civil War, including the sectionalism fueled by issues of slavery in the territories, states’ rights, the election of 1860, and secession (4-6.3).

In 11th grade United States history, students will compare the social and cultural characteristics of the North, the South, and the West during the antebellum period, including the lives of African Americans and social reform movements such as abolition and women’s rights (USHC-4.1). Students will explain how the political events and issues that divided the nation led to civil war, including the compromises reached to maintain the balance of free and slave states, the successes and failures of the abolitionist movement, the conflicting views on states’ rights and federal authority, the emergence of the Republican Party and its win in 1860, and the formation of the Confederate States of America (USHC-4.2).

It is essential for students to know:

Several key events and movements contributed to South Carolina’s secession from the Union in 1860.

The first indicator of national trouble between the north and south came when Missouri applied for statehood. Northern states were concerned about Missouri joining the Union as a slave state because it was the first state admitted from the Louisiana Purchase (thereby setting a precedent) and it would upset the equal balance of slave and free states’ votes that was balanced in the Senate. A compromise was reached that admitted Missouri as a slave state and Maine as a free state. The **Missouri Compromise** tried to avoid future controversy by prohibiting slavery in the Louisiana Territory north of the 36 30’ latitude line. However, southerners learned from this crisis the importance of maintaining the balance of Senate votes from slave and free states.

The **nullification crisis** was the result of the different impact that protective tariffs had on the North and the South. A protective tariff is designed to raise import taxes on goods coming from foreign countries in order to make them more expensive than goods produced in the United States. This would benefit the emerging industries in the North. However, since South Carolina was largely agricultural, a protective tariff would raise the price of the manufactured goods that South Carolinians would buy from the industrial north or from Great Britain. Therefore southerners objected to raising the protective tariff. When the United States Congress passed a protective tax in 1828, then Vice President John C. Calhoun anonymously wrote *South Carolina Exposition and Protest*. Calhoun claimed that it was a states’ right to

declare such a law unconstitutional and nullify it through a special state convention. This position threatened the unity of the United States and was widely debated in both Washington, D.C. and South Carolina. South Carolinians split into a States' Rights Party (Nullifiers) and a Union party (Unionists). In 1832, the Nullifiers won control of the General Assembly. When the United States Congress passed another tariff in 1832, the South Carolina legislature called a meeting to nullify the tariff. John C. Calhoun

resigned the vice presidency and entered the U. S. Senate where he was a strong voice against the tariff and for nullification. President Andrew Jackson condemned the flouting of federal law and urged Congress to pass a Force Bill that would authorize the national government to send troops to collect the tariff in South Carolina. The crisis ended with a compromise. Congress lowered the tariff and the South Carolina repealed the nullification. However, South Carolina then nullified the Force Bill, thus asserting a state's right to declare an act of Congress to be unconstitutional in that state. The states' right idea would continue to develop. [This will be the only time that the nullification crisis will be taught.]

The **Compromise of 1850** was the result of California applying to be admitted to the union. The California Territory became part of the United States through the treaty that ended the Mexican War. After the discovery of gold in 1849, people flocked to California. They did not want to compete with slave owners who would be able to use their slaves to mine for gold. Because Californians wanted their state to be 'free soil', they applied for admission as a free state. This would upset the balance of slave and free states. The Compromise allowed California to be a free state but also outlawed the slave trade in Washington D.C. It provided that the rest of the Mexican Cession would decide whether or not the residents wanted to be a slave or free states through the vote, popular sovereignty. Southerners also got a new Fugitive Slave Law that gave them more opportunity to capture and return to the South slaves that had escaped. This last provision caused much controversy.

The **Kansas-Nebraska Act** was also the result of westward expansion. The Kansas Territory was in the northern part of the Louisiana Territory so according to the Missouri Compromise it could not be a slave state. However, some politicians wanted to build a railroad across the country through Kansas and they needed to get southern support. Southerners, especially Jefferson Davis, wanted to build a transcontinental railroad on a southern route from New Orleans. The Kansas-Nebraska Act repealed the 36° 30' line of the **Missouri Compromise**. It allowed people in these territories to decide for themselves whether or not to allow slavery within their borders through 'popular sovereignty.' In order to affect that vote, northern abolitionists and southern slave owners moved into the Kansas Territory. Soon their fighting led people to call the area "Bleeding Kansas."

The **Dred Scott** decision was an attempt by the Supreme Court to end the controversy over the role of free states in determining the status of the enslaved. Dred Scott was a slave whose master had taken him into free territory. With the help of northern abolitionists, Scott sued his master for his freedom claiming 'once free, always free.' The Supreme Court decided that African Americans were not citizens of the United States, even if they had been born in the United States, and therefore they had no right to sue in the Supreme Court. In fact, the court said they had no rights at all. However, the court went on to rule that Scott was property and that the Constitution of the United States protects the owner of property from having that property taken away by the government. Therefore, the court further ruled that Congress could not pass measures such as the Missouri Compromise or the Kansas Nebraska Act limiting the expansion of slavery into the territories. Such acts were ruled unconstitutional because they denied the slave owner the right to take his property anywhere that he wanted. The Dred Scott decision did not end the controversy over slavery. Instead, northerners claimed that the court would deny them the right to outlaw slavery in their states and would end the idea of popular sovereignty, limiting democracy. South Carolinians applauded the decision and accepted the Supreme Court's ruling as the final word on the issue. Debates over the *Dred Scott* decision led Republican Abraham Lincoln to national prominence and split the Democratic Party.

The purpose of the **Abolitionist Movement** was to outlaw slavery throughout the United States. Although the abolitionist movement grew in the North it was effective in South Carolina only in making slave owners more determined to hold onto their peculiar institution. Abolitionists were active in South Carolina prior to the uncovering of the Denmark Vesey plot. However, after the plot was uncovered, abolitionists such as Sarah and Angelina Grimke were forced to either leave the state or keep silent. It is important for students to understand that the abolitionist movement was not popular among most northerners. The abolitionist movement grew with the publication of antislavery newspapers such as *The Liberator* by William A Garrison. Postmasters across the state removed from the mails what they considered inflammatory materials including anti slavery newspapers. Abolitionists were ineffective in persuading South Carolinians to abolish slavery. Abolitionists helped to man the Underground Railroad, however, this had limited impact in South Carolina since the state was too far from the border with free states to make this escape route effective. Abolitionist groups sent settlers to Kansas to try to make that state a free state and joined with the ‘free soilers’ to form the Republican Party. Abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* helped the movement grow in the North by evoking sympathy for slaves. However the book was called a lie in South Carolina. Abolitionists supported Dred Scott in his plea before the Supreme Court. Abolitionist John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry evoked a fear of slave rebellion among southerners.

The **election of 1860** prompted South Carolina to secede from the Union. Republican Abraham Lincoln campaigned on a platform of ‘free soil’. ‘Free soil’ is the idea that slavery should not be allowed to *expand* to the territories. However, Lincoln was *not* an abolitionist in 1860, but a free-soiler. Lincoln won the election with electoral votes from the North. Southerners and border states split their votes among several candidates. South Carolina called a special convention and signed Articles of Secession claiming that the rights of South Carolinians had not been and would not be protected by the federal government. Other southern states seceded soon after.

It is not essential for students to know

William A. Garrison’s strategies were strongly influenced by African American abolitionists such as William E. Watkins, Jacob Greener and David Walker. South Carolina sent settlers to Kansas to support the pro-slavery constitution. Students do not need to know the actions of other states at this time nor all of the candidates and their platforms for the presidency of 1860. Also, students do not need to know specific population numbers in the various states admitted to the Union.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessments would require students to **explain** the impact of key events leading to South Carolina’s secession from the Union. Assessments may require students to **compare** one compromise to another, to **identify examples** of the key events. Students should also be able to **summarize** how the key events led to secession.